Farm Prices In 1957

(This week we're passing on to farmers some of the trends which showed up in Virginia farm commodity prices in 1957, hoping this review will help in planning for 1958).

On the whole, 1957 Virginia farm prices averaged out about the same as last year, but like their counterparts across the nation, Virginia farmers felt a tighter cost - price squeeze as prices of the things they bought went up another 1%.

Virginia's farm prices were a little higher the first half of the year; a little lower the last half, and the trend of the past few years toward narrower spreads between lows and highs showed up in several commodities, indicating that more orderly marketing is still a factor.

Commodities which improved price-wise in 1957 were hogs, cattle, hay, peaches, lambs, and in the last half of the year, eggs.

Generally lower prices were felt in broilers, turkeys, soybeans, potatoes, sweet potatoes, apples, and most types of tobacco.

Mostly farm prices followed normal patterns and trends, with no great disruptions except as abnormal weather . . either too dry or too wet . . struck blows at critical periods.

Reviewing 1957 by commodity:

BROILERS

Prices in 1957 reacted to the national record crop, and even though Virginia went her own way with a 3% production drop, our broiler income suffered.

Meanwhile, the switch to incentive plan took away some of the risk, and the industry worked harder than ever at lowering production costs. Prices took a normal course—up to a 23c high in August, down to a 14c December low, averaging out at about 19c, the lowest average on record.

EGGS

Eggs started the year at a discouragingly low level, staying below last year until around September. Then as producers moved to cutback, prices reacted, moving quickly upward to a 50-60c range and held the rest of the year. Supply was the reason all the way. Virginia's average production was 5% above last year. The U. S. average about the same.

TURKEYS

Virginia turkey producers, facing disaster prices if the tremendous supply build-up continued, moved with the rest of the nation to cut numbers about mid-year, thus greatly improving the situation. Prices the first half of the year . . with a 63% larger total supply . . were 5 to 6c below last year. A swift cutback, plus a push at retail levels, saved the day and by Christmas, prices were close to 1957 level. This may prove to be the year when turkey became a year-round meat. Summertime consumption was about 10% higher this year.

HOGS

Hog producers reaped the benefits of their cutback in numbers after the discouraging year of 1955, with prices moving to the best level since that time, $3 to $4 higher than last year. Marketing patterns were about normal, except the peak price . . usually in May or June . . was later, coming in August.

Virginia's 1957 pig crop was up 2% from last year, while the nation's was about the same.

CATTLE

The beginning of what is probably a new cattle cycle was the big news in this industry, as numbers turned down for the first time in about 7 years. However, this may have been affected some as western producers, just recovering from a prolonged drought, began a big re-stocking move.

As stock was held back to build up herds, Virginia's feeder calf market strengthened some $1 to $3 above last year, with strong interest in heifers. Veal and cow prices reflected the general stronger tone, too.

Locally, cattle prices held unusually well after the usual May peak, probably because early dry weather evened out marketings some, and then fall rains improved pastures enough to keep some animals off the market for a while.

Virginia slaughter cattle, numbers reduced by the corn shortage, average the year a dollar or so above last year.

LAMBS

Fewer lambs in the state brought a little better average price than last year, and an unusually narrow price spread, about $4 between the high and low. The most help, price wise, came from strength after August, rather than from the price peak, which came as usual in May. Production, off for the second year in a row, seems to be declining in Southwest Virginia; holding in the Valley.

CORN

Plenty of corn everywhere else kept 1957 prices about 20c a bushel below last year, but Virginia's average was a bit better, reflecting a short local supply which pulled the level up quicker than usual after harvest.

The year's high peaked in August and averaged $1.45, dropping to $1.34 in October and November. The drought cut yield to 26 1-2 bushels to the acre, lowest since 1944, adding up to 46% less corn than last year.

GRAINS

Too much rain last winter and dry weather in spring hit yields of small grains, but price levels stayed close to 1957, hinging on support rates. Narrower margins between highs and lows showed up, and in Virginia, new facilities relieved the harvest glut and sharpened competition some.

TOBACCO

In Virginia, poor quality in flue-cured tobacco held the price to around 2c a pound below last year, as the rest of the flue-cured belt moved on to the highest prices on record.

For all types of tobacco in Virginia—mostly flue-cured—the average was around a cent lower than last year. Weather gets the blame for a slightly lower yield per acre. Production dropped 26% as acreage was decreased 27% under allotments.

WHITE POTATOES

Marketing factors didn't stack up in favor of Virginia's white potato producers in 1957 like they did in 1956, and the average price was only a third of the 1956 level.

Dry weather during the growing season reduced production 13%, even with a slight acreage increase.

Economics Is Simple

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About The Home

By Frances Dell

Most of us spend a great deal of our time in the kitchen. When we build a new home or remodel an old one, the kitchen usually has more money spent on it than any other room in the house.

Your way of living determines what your kitchen should be like. For this reason planning or rearranging it is a very personal matter. Not every old or middleage kitchen needs extensive remodeling. In many cases, one or two small changes will work wonders in increased convenience and general livability.

Often a new or recently remodeled kitchen, after it has been lived in awhile, will reveal certain shortcomings. Don't be discouraged, even the best designers of kitchens admit this is not unusual.

One thing we all agree on is lots of light in the kitchen. Daylight and sunlight give a cheerful feeling to the room. Give artificial light careful attention. General lighting throughout the room and concentrated light over work areas such as the stove and sink.

A heat register often cuts into space needed for kitchen cabinets. This can be turned into an advantage by building a sitdown work counter or desk with knee room beneath. The top should be 28 inches from the floor for peeling vegetables or writing without strain.

The materials used in the kitchen must be easy to care for. Natural wood cabinets have become very popular for this reason. They are finished with a sealer and then are given a hard clear surface that only needs a damp cloth rubbed over it to clean.

The kitchen is being combined with the family room to make things more pleasing for mother. She can cook and still join in the family conversations.

NEWS from HOLLYWOOD

Another Broadway actor who has come to Hollywood is Pernell Roberts, who has been set for an important role in MGM's "The Sheepman," starring Glenn Ford, Shirley MacLaine and Leslie Nielsen.

Robert Mitchum's most important competition these days is his handsome 16-year-old son, Jim, who plays his dad's brother in "The Whippoorwill," a story about Southern moonshiners. Jim is so much like Bob, he could pass for his twin, except he's even taller.

Marlene Dietrich has signed a three-year contract for two appearances yearly at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, for $600,000.

Molly Bee, the young singer who made such a hit with Tennessee Ernie on his daytime television show last year, has signed a contract at Universal-International. Mollie, who is only 18, will receive a starting salary of $1,500 a week.

Audrey Hepburn's clothes for "Green Mansions" will be designed by Dorothy Jeakins, who designed clothes for "South Pacific."

"Miss Universe of 1957, Ingrid Goude, recently signed for a part in "Never Steal Anything Small," for Aaron Roesburg. She plays a model.

Because of illness, Gale Storm has had to cancel all her personal-appearance tours, in the East, even the charity affairs.

Brian Keith will co-star with Richard Denning in Robert Stabler's production, "Dessert Hell," for Twentieth-Century-Fox.

As soon as "Maybe Smith" is in the can, MacDonald Carey heads for New York to meet Bob Whitehead where they will discuss a deal for the male lead in "Goldilocks," a Broadway musical. You may remember that Carey was with Gertrude Lawrence in "Lady In the Dark" some years back.

COMMENT ON SPORTS

By Pete Fritchie

Washington- They are now talking seriously about a second Robinson - Basilio bout in February in boxing circles. As this is written the time is fast approaching when Robinson must decide.

Actually, something might have broken on this question by the time you read these lines. Ray doesn't have long to get into shape if he is going to fight again. It must be a terribly hard decision for the once-top fighter to make.

So whether he fights or not, here are the factors which must have been gnawing at his innards these last couple of months:

1. Ray Robinson was probably the finest fighter, pound for pound, of the century. It goes without saying that a lot of pride is therefore involved in the Basilio feud. It is hard for Ray to think he can't win "just one more," the last "big one" to get even.

2. A February bout would make him a lot of money.

3. If he won the title back, he could retire as champion, with tremendous acclaim from all sides.

On the other hand, these are the factors which have been working on Ray, from the other direction:

1. It would be hard to take a severe beating and bow out in a one-sided bout.

2. One can't go on fighting forever and he is old for a fighter (not too far from 40.)

3. There are other ways to make money, maybe in the acting or entertainment fields.

If you were a fighter, what would you do? Most of them fight "just one more." But Robinson has already achieved his miraculous come-back. Must he have another? We suspect he'll fight again. Maybe our hunch, right or wrong, will be proven or disproven by the time this column is printed.

KNOW THE WEATHER

By E. H. Sims

What is the cricket rule? Do the chirps of the black cricket really give the correct temperature outside?

The cricket rule is widely recognized and thought to be infallible. It is simple and will give you the actual outside temperature to within one degree.

Here is the rule, long known by oldtime farmers and weather observers: Count the black cricket's chirps for fourteen seconds. Add the number of chirps to the number 40.

The sum of the chirps heard in fourteen seconds, plus the number 40, will give you a temperature reading that will accurately reflect the reading on your thermometer. Check this natural formula next time you hear crickets, and prove it to yourself.

PULASKI FARMER HAS SUCCESSFUL FERTILIZER USE

Blacksburg, Va.- "A good well-rounded fertilization program pays," states Pulaski County Agent Roy A. Meek. Grover C. Boothe, one of Pulaski County's most progressive farmers helps him to demonstrate this fact.

Boothe is the owner of a 293-acre farm and is probably the county's greatest advocate of the proper use of fertilizer.

Of this 293 acres, 219 are devoted to pasture, which is predominantly bluegrass and white dutch clover. One-third of this pasture is treated each year with 400 pounds of 0-10-20 fertilizer per acre, which means that all of Boothe's pasture is treated once every three years. Soil tests are taken annually and lime is applied when the pH is below 5.5 in an effort to keep the pH of the soil between 6.0 and 6.5. During 1957 Boothe carried .6 animal units per acre, double the county average of .3 units per acre.

Forty-nine acres of the Boothe farm are devoted to the growth of alfalfa. This alfalfa is top-dressed annually with 500 pounds per acre of 0-20-40, plus boron. Because of the topography all fields devoted to its growth are left in alfalfa as long as it is profitable. When re-establishing alfalfa stands, the land is seeded to oats in the spring and back to alfalfa in the fall. This leaves the soil without cover for a minimum of time.

When alfalfa is seeded, Boothe uses 33 pounds of nitrogen, 120 pounds of phosphate, and 120 pounds of potash (plus borax) per acre. Of course, the soil is tested and limed to keep the pH above 6.5. Yield on this forty-nine acres in 1957 was 257 tons of 5.25 tons per acre, away above the county average of 2.3 tons per acre.

Boothe has only two fields that can be used for cultivated crops without danger of excessive erosion. Thus, he is forced to use a soil conserving rotation, which is unusual for Pulaski County. It consists of corn, barley, and rye. The rye is used for cover crop, following barley. This, along with barley that is seeded after corn, furnishes an winter pasture for Boothe's sheep with lambs. Thus, he has fairly well balanced livestock program.

When rye is seeded, 300 pounds of 10-20-20 fertilizer is used. To cover crop is plowed under in Ma and corn is planted in a mixed fertilizer. This practice is largely responsible for the fact that 379 bu els of corn were produced on 1 acres. This, too, is away above county average of 45 bushels p acre. The remainder of the fourt acres in corn was put in the This averaged 25.5 tons per ac Any farmer would be proud of yield.

Boothe uses 325 pounds of 10-20-20 per acre when seeding barley. This has helped him to duce 55 bushels per acre which also away above the county av age of 33 bushels per acre.

When asked why he is using fertilization program, Boothe sta that he found that with the pres price-cost squeeze on the far he must produce more efficien Proper fertilization has been one the biggest tools which he has use in combating this problem.

GOLDEN GLEAMS

Measure your mind's height by the shade it casts. —Robert Bro

On earth there is nothing gr but man; in man there is noth great but mind. —William Ha ton.

Little minds are interested in t extraordinary; great minds in commonplace. —Elbert Hubbard

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Evergreen

Evergreen, Dec. 31.- Mussie Hamilton Circle met in the home of Mrs. John Kent Hamilton recently, with good attendance.

Mr. and Mrs. John Notestein and son spent the holidays with their mother at Smithfield, Va.

Mr. Frank Glover, of Washington, D. C. visited relatives here during the holidays.

Mr. Arcehr LeGrand, Jr., of Baltimore, and family spent Christmas with his father, Mr. A. A. LeGrand and family.

Visiting in this same home were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Harvey, Richard, and Mr. Albert Wright, of Hampton, Va.

A number from here attended the funeral of Mrs. Taylor Inge Sunday afternoon at Pamplin.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Franklin and family were dinner guests Saturday evening in the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Paulette. Others visiting in this home Saturday evening were Mrs. Elizabeth P. Robinson and Miss Cassie Baldwin, of Pamplin.

Mrs. Clara Garrett and daughters, Mrs. Kenneth St. John and Mrs. T. E. Inge and Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Garrett visited Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Garrett in Lynchburg during the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. Ned Shorter are the proud parents of a son, arrived last week at a hospital in Lynchburg.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Staples and son, H. C. Staples, Jr., visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Doss at Sherwell Sunday P. M.

Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Lowe and children, of Lynchburg, spent Sunday in the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Paulette.

Members of the P.-T. A. served the meeting of the Ruritan Club during the holidays.

Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Paulette and Mrs. Rachel McFadden and children spent Thursday with her mother, Mrs. B. M. Ferguson and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ferguson.

Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Bruce and family spent Christmas with his mother, Mrs. Eva Snowden, at Port Royal, Va.

Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Griffith, of Richmond and Mrs. Mary Sullivan, of Lynchburg, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Glover.

Also guests were Mr. and Mrs. Howard Glover and Mr. and Mrs. S. D. Thompson, of Lynchburg, and Mrs. Elijah Farrar and daughter, Patsy.

The Young Peoples' Adult Class, of the Methodist Church, held its annual Christmas dinner at The Columns in Lynchburg on Friday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Z. V. Harvey were dinner guests Sunday in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Richardson, of Pamplin.

Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Staples and Mrs. and Mrs. Gordon Staples, and H. C. Staples, Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Harvey, were dinner guests Sunday evening in the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Jennings.

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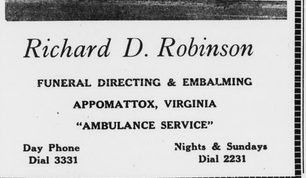
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Vera

Vera, Dec. 30.- "Beloved now are we the sons of God and it doth yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is." .3 John 3-2.

Now as we enter into a New Year, I hope each and every one of us may try to do more good in every way than we have in years gone by, knowing that we pass this way but once.

Well, Christmas Day was a pretty day and everything passed off so nicely. So many happy homes. The families all gathered in the old homes and spent a happy day. Some homes were very sad with so many vacant chairs.

Supper guests in the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Harvey on Saturday night were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carson, Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Watson, Mr. Walter Webb, and Mr. and Mrs. Dick Webb and Bonnie.

Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Harvey and Harriette visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Webb Thursday night.

We are glad to hear that Miss Odell Webb is recovering from an operation, and expects to leave the hospital some time this week.

Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Harvey and Harriette visited in the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Harvey in Richmond on Sunday.

Mrs. Hallie Morris had all of her children and all but two of her grandchildren to spend a happy day in the old home Christmas Day.

SEE NEED FOR BOOST IN CAR INSURANCE RATES

New York- "Motorists in most states face higher charges for automobile liability insurance in 1958."

This view of the outlook for automobile insurance rates was given to the public by William Leslie, general manager of the National Bureau of Casualty Underwriters, a rating organization with a membership of 122 stock companies writing casualty insurance.

"The outlook is based not on opinion but on stern economic facts," Mr. Leslie stated. "Reluctant as the insurance carriers are to seek higher rates, there is no alternative. As inflationary pressures continue to push up the costs of settling accident claims incurred by insured motorists, rate revisions during 1958 will undoubtedly involve increases. In many states rate increases have already been approved by supervisory authorities that will affect a large part of the volume of business written in 1958.

"During 1956 member companies of the Bureau suffered a country-wide underwriting loss of 7.0 per cent on automobile liability insurance. This means that automobile liability claim costs and expenses mounted to $107.90 for every $100 of premiums earned, or an aggregate underwriting loss of more than $64,000,000. Their automobile physical damage insurance business — collision, comprehensive, fire, theft, etc. —was also unprofitable. Other stock companies and mutual companies also sustained serious underwriting losses during 1956.

"Reports for the first six months of 1957 indicate the prospect of an even worse underwriting loss situation for the year 1957.

"Inflation has forced up average claim costs for both bodily injury and property damage liability. In addition, the adverse effect of inflation on property damage claims has been aggravated by continually climbing repair costs resulting from car design, the new wrap-around windshields, for example.

FEEDING VALUE OF COOKED GARBAGE FOR SWINE STUDIED

Using a dry meal supplement for swine being fed high quality cooked garbage doesn't seem to be profitable, according to tests at the VPI Agricultural Experiment Station.

Researchers at the Station also concluded that the level of garbage feeding has no influence on such carcass characteristics as backfat thickness or softness.

In the test 10 weanling pigs were used to determine the nutritive value of cooked garbage. Treatments included none, 1-2, and 1-4 of a full feed of a conventional swine ration, with cooked garbage available free-choice to all treatment groups.

Thirty-pound pigs receiving cooked garbage as the only feed averaged 1.3 pounds in daily body weight while pigs about 40 pounds in initial body weight averaged 1.5 pounds in daily gain over a 66-day feeding period. Although conventional dry meal as a supplement to garbage produced greater weight gains than garbage alone in pigs between 30 and 140 pounds, it is doubtful, the scientists say, that supplementary feeding would be profitable if high-quality garbage is available. For pigs between 125 and 150 pounds, supplementary feed had little or no influence on body weights.

Carcass analyses failed to reveal any characteristics attributable to garbage feeding.

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